BEACON HILL AREA

NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT

RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

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RESIDENTIAL DESIGN STANDARDS

The Residential Design Standards encompass a wide range of architectural elements of houses, such as porches, garages and auto storage structures and exterior building materials. The Craftsman style is the most common architectural style in the NCD Area. Examples of Folk Victorian, Neo-Classical, Prairie, and Spanish Eclectic architectural styles also can be found within the neighborhood.

Typical Craftsman style home found in the neighborhood

While there are a number historical styles exist in the neighborhood, the intent of the design standards is not to replicate the styles, but ensure the historically common site/building configurations are perpetuated in the future. Substantial porch areas located in the front of the primary structure, walkways that lead directly to a entry space from the street, garages located to the rear of the primary dwelling structure, regular building setbacks across block faces, and vertically-oriented windows are some of the common site and building features that are regulated through the Residential Design Standards.

Example of a less-common Prairie style home

Example of a Spanish eclectic home found in the neighborhood

The standards are less about architectural style and more about maintaining the development patterns in the neighborhood, which has been compromised by construction of new residential structures that are allowed by the current UDC development standards and typically found in suburban areas of San Antonio.

The rationale for creating the Residential Design Standards is further validated by the Building Characteristics Maps found in *Appendix A* of this plan. The Building Characteristics Maps depict the frequency of site and building characteristics found in this NCD Area.

The NCD design standards are specific and finite in nature, but maintain a level of flexibility that will allow for continued variety in the architecture and allow for creative design in the future.

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NOTES:

Generally there is a mix of residential building heights throughout the neighborhood. The Unified Development Code maximum building height (35' or 2½ stories for single family residential structures) will generally maintain the patterns of construction in the neighborhood. Multi-family structures within the district also maintain a similar scale throughout the neighborhood.

DEFINITIONS:

Height, building: the vertical dimension from the average elevation of the finish lot grade at the front of the building to the highest point of the ceiling of the top story in the case of a flat roof; to the deckline of a mansard roof, and the average height between the plate and ridge of a gable, hip or gambrel roof.

Story: that part of a building between the surface of a floor and the ceiling immediately above.

BUILDING HEIGHT / NO. OF STORIES

DESIGN STANDARDS

Single-family residential structures shall be no taller than 2-1/2 stories, and 35' in height.

Multi-family residential structures shall be no taller than 3 stories.

Typical single story residential structure

Typical two-and-a-half story residential structure

Typical two-story, multi-family residential structure

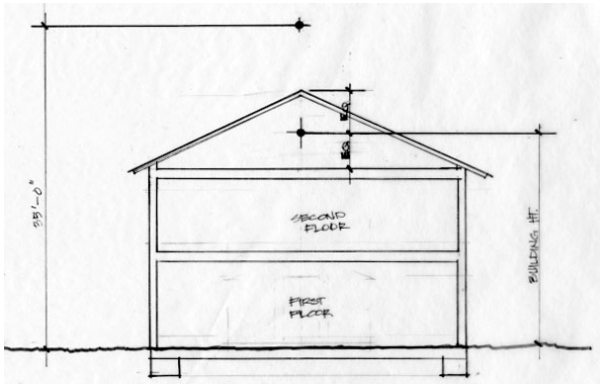

Diagram of UDC residential building height limitations and method of determining building height

NOTES:

If an existing lot size currently exceeds the design standard range, any portion of the lot may be re-platted to reduce the size of the original lot, even if the remaining portion of the lot exceeds the standard.

LOT SIZE / COVERAGE

DESIGN STANDARDS

The lot size of any re-platted parcel shall not be reduced nor increased greater than 25% of the existing median lot size, per block face, or, if a corner parcel condition, shall not be increased greater than 40% of the existing median lot size, per block face.

The minimum lot width for any parcel with a single-family residential use shall be twenty-five (25) feet.

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FRONT / SIDE YARD SETBACKS

DESIGN STANDARDS

Primary Dwelling Structures

Front: The front setback for a primary dwelling structure on a residential lot shall maintain the most restrictive setback of:

a. the distance between 10% of the existing “median” setback on the block face,

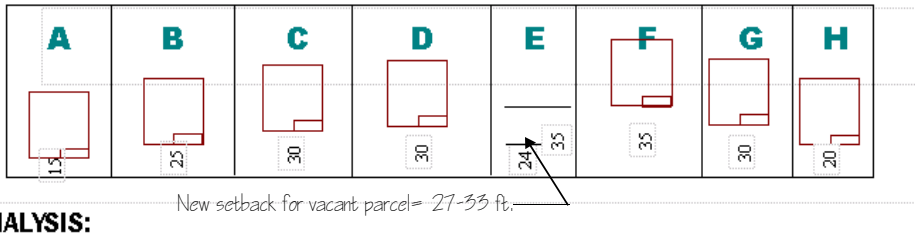
b. the distance of 10% of the mean setback of the adjacent structures, if within the 10% median range, or

c. a maximum setback of 35 feet, if both conditions (a) and (b) exceed 35 ft.

Ancillary (non-dwelling) Structures:

The front setback for an ancillary dwelling structure shall be located within the back 35% of the parcel.

Example Setback Configuration & Analysis



ANALYSIS:

Existing Setbacks A-F In Numerical Order (ft): **15, 20, 25, 30, 30, 30, 35**

Median Setback on Blockface = 30 ft

Median Setback +/- 10% = 27-33 ft

Mean Setback of Adj. Structures = 32.5 ft

Mean Setback + 10% of Adj. Structures = 29.25 - 35.75 ft

Setback maximum allowed = 35 ft

Setback allowance for vacant parcel “E” per most restrictive: 27 - 33 ft

NOTES:

The residential structures in the neighborhood genrally maintain a similar setback along individual block faces creating a rhythm and continuity along the streetscape.

The 'most restrictive setback' in the design standard refers to the greater of the three setback conditions.

DEFINITIONS:

Block face: properties that align on one side of the street along one block.

Setback: a line on a lot parallel to and measured from a corresponding lot line, establishing the minmum required yard and governing the placement of structures and uses of the lot.

Median: a number (the middle number) that separates the higher half and lower half of a set of numbers. In the case of a median setback on a block face with building front setbacks of : 15', 20', 25', 30', 30', 30' and 35';the median setback of the seven values would be 30'. If there is an even number of values then the median will be the average of the two middle numbers.

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NOTES:

There are a wide range of structure sizes throughout the neighborhood, therefore, it was determined that it would not be beneficial or practical to require minimum or maximum building size restrictions for primary dwelling structures. There are, however, a range of sizes for ancillary (secondary) structures, such as garages, carports, garage apartments, and sheds, throughout the area, which should be relative to the size of the primary structure.

DEFINITIONS:

Building footprint: the horizontal area measured within the outside of the exterior walls of the ground floor of the main structure. For the purpose of this NCD Plan, porches shall be included in the calculation of building footprint area.

BUILDING SIZE / MASSING

DESIGN STANDARDS

Ancillary structures shall be constructed or rehabilitated so as not to exceed a) 40% of the primary dwelling structure's building footprint and b) 80% of the primary dwelling structure's total height.

Example of residential property with an appropriately scaled secondary (ancillary) structure

Example of residential property with an appropriately scaled secondary (ancillary) structure

Inappropriate ancillary structure height (background) (same as primary structure, foreground)

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PAVING / IMPERVIOUS COVER

DESIGN STANDARDS

Infill sidewalks shall maintain the existing width of the adjacent sidewalk. Existing sidewalks may not be removed, unless replaced as noted below.

If replacing more than 50% of the entire length of the sidewalk behind the property line (toward structure), sidewalks are to be constructed at a minimum width of 4' and at least 3' behind the curb, except at locations where street trees or other existing site obstructions will prevent this sidewalk placement. Transitions in sidewalk width and/or distance from curb shall occur on the street side of the sidewalk and/or at the driveway (see *Diagram 1*).

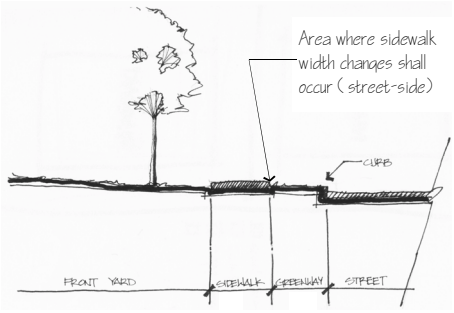

Diagram 1 –street section showing area where side walk width changes are to occur

Driveway curb cuts shall not exceed 15' in width, and a maximum of one curb cut per lot or 75' of frontage. Circular driveways are not permitted.

Driveway areas beyond the curb cut shall maintain a maximum width of 12', from the intersection with the street to a point 5' behind the primary structure setback. Driveway "runways/ ribbons" at a width of 1'-6" and 2'-6" are preferred to solid surface driveways; if solid surface, impervious driveways are used, it is preferable to maintain a width of 8'-10'.

Typical sidewalk and driveway configuration conforming to design standards

Non–conforming driveway and sidewalk configuration

NOTES:

Minimal use of impervious cover for driveways and the location of curbs is of major importance to this district. Typical separation of the curb and sidewalk is something that is valued in this district. In addition, single-car width driveways, and the use of driveway ribbons are common throughout the area.

DEFINITIONS:

Driveway: entrance to and exit from premises where it is possible to park completely off the street, and which is not open to vehicular traffic except by permission of the owner of such private property.

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NOTES:

The residential structures in this district have detached garages, carport, an attached garage or no auto storage structure at all.

The most common characteristic is a detached garage or a carport structure located in the side or rear yard.

Temporary structures are considered those structures that do not possess or are not attached to a permanent foundation such as a slab-on-grade, piles, piers, concrete footing or other form designed to give permanent and un-movable stability to a structuire above grade.

The placement of garages and carports required by the NCD Standards does not relieve the setback requirements set forth by the base zoning development standards found in the *Unified Development Code*.

DEFINITIONS:

Facade: the exterior wall of a building exposed to public view or that wall seen by persons not within the building.

Garage: a building or part thereof accessory to a main building and providing for the storage of automobiles and which no occupation or business for profit is carried on, enclosed on all four sides, and pierced only by windows and customary doors.

Carport: space for the housing or storage of motor vehicles and enclosed on not more than (2) sides by walls.

GARAGES, CARPORTS AND AUTO STORAGE

DESIGN STANDARDS

GARAGES:
A garage may only be constructed in the rear yard (or side, if corner lot).

CARPORTS:
A detached carport may be constructed in the rear yard (or side yard, if corner lot). It may also be constructed as an integral element of the primary structure, if it a) is recessed a minimum of 5' behind the primary structure front facade, and b) is constructed of building materials with the same scale, proportion and/or profile, and c) maintains the same roof line(s) as the primary structure.

TEMPORARY CARPORT STRUCTURES:
Temporary carport structures, such as those constructed of canvas or vinyl tent materials with pole supports, are prohibited.

Typical garage / carport placement conforming to the design standards

Non-conforming carport location and materials

Non-conforming carport location and materials

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FENCING / FENCE MATERIALS

DESIGN STANDARDS

Fencing and/or front yard walls are strongly discouraged within the front yard area. However, if front yard fencing/walls are used, the UDC standards height/transparency shall apply (4' height maximum with 3' height solid material), and in addition, the use of fencing materials such as lattice, "fencrete," or similar product, or chain link (cyclone) shall be prohibited.

Fencing in the side yard and backyard shall be allowed in accordance with the existing Unified Development Code standards.

NOTES: *UDC Section 35-514 Fences and Walls* specifies the requirements and limitations of fencing within the City of San Antonio.

Fencing in the front yard is a relatively common condition in the neighborhood, though it can inhibit social interaction of people along neighborhood streets. However, it was determined that front yard fencing should be allowed in accordance with UDC regulations with some material limitations to improve the visual quality of front yards throughout the neightbor-hood.

DEFINITIONS:

Front yard: an area extending the full width of a lot between the front lot line and the nearest principal structure.

Side yard: an area extending the depth of a lot from the front yard to the rear yard between the side lot and the nearest principal structure.

Example (above and right) of appropriate fencing design and materials

Example of non-conforming fencing (insufficient transparency)

Example of non-conforming fencing material

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NOTES:

The use of natural wood siding, cement-fiber board siding, stucco, brick or stone is encouraged.

Generally, there is a wide variety of roof shapes, pitches and materials throughout the NCD Area. Therefore, it was determined that it would not be beneficial to require a standard for roof pitches, however, it was noted that roofing materials were more common than diverse, and that a recommendation on roofing materials was desired.

RECOMMENDATION:

Asphalt (composite), metal, clay tile and wood shingle are the common roofing materials found in this neighborhood, which are highly encouraged.

BUILDING MATERIALS- FACADE, ROOFING

DESIGN STANDARDS

BUILDING FACADE:
Building materials for primary and ancillary structures (visible from the right-of-way) shall match the existing structure in scale, proportion, and/or profile.

Appropriate use of common building materials

Appropriate use of common building materials

Conforming, but uncharacteristic use of building materials

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PRINCIPAL ELEVATION FEATURES - PORCHES

DESIGN STANDARDS

For residential structures with porches, the porch may not be reduced in size, but may be enclosed with materials such as glass or screens, and no less than 80% transparency.

New single-family residential structures, or those structures that will undergo substantial reconstruction/rehabilitation of the front facade, shall include a front porch that is at least 8 feet deep and 50% of the primary dwelling structure width along the street facing facade.

NOTES:

Eighty percent of the structures within the neighborhood feature a front porch (*See Building Characteristics Map - Front Porch Configuration, Appendix A*). Across the various styles and variations of residential architecture, the front porch remains a common architectural element that defines the entry to residential structures, and promotes social interaction of people along the street.

Transparency percentage refers to the amount of surface area of a porch enclosure (walls or vertical surfaces) that must be constructed of transparent materials compared to the total surface area of the enclosure.

DEFINITIONS:

Porch: A roofed area, which may be glazed or screened, attached to or part of and with direct access to or from a structure and usually located on the front or side of the structure.

Residential structure's front porch with an appropriate enclosure and transparency ratio

Residential structure with an appropriate porch width (greater than 1/2 of the structure's street façade width)

Residential structure with a non-conforming enclosure and transparency ratio of an existing porch

Residential structure with a non-conforming porch width (less than 1/2 of the structure's street façade width)

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NOTES:

Facades throughout the neighborhood are articulated with substantial amounts of surface area dedicated to window and door openings with vertically oriented fenestrations.

The vertically oriented window is a very common feature of residential structures throughout the district, the windows maybe be hung in tandem creating openings that are more square in shape.

The term 'decorative window' refers to a window with non-standard dimensions or shape (such as circular, square or a ribbon window) that is designed to accent a facade or let a certain amount of natural light into an interior space of a structure.

DEFINITIONS:

Window: an opening constructed in a wall and which admits light or air to an enclosures framed and spanned with glass, and which may be mounted to permit opening and closing.

PRINCIPAL ELEVATION FEATURES – WINDOWS

DESIGN STANDARDS

Appropriate window dimension and percentage of first floor dedicated to window openings

Windows visible from the public rights-of-way (with the exception of bathroom or kitchen windows) shall maintain a minimum vertical to horizontal dimension ratio of 2:1, and at least a 1-over-1 light division. Casement windows may also be used, provided the vertical dimension is maintained, regardless of the light division.

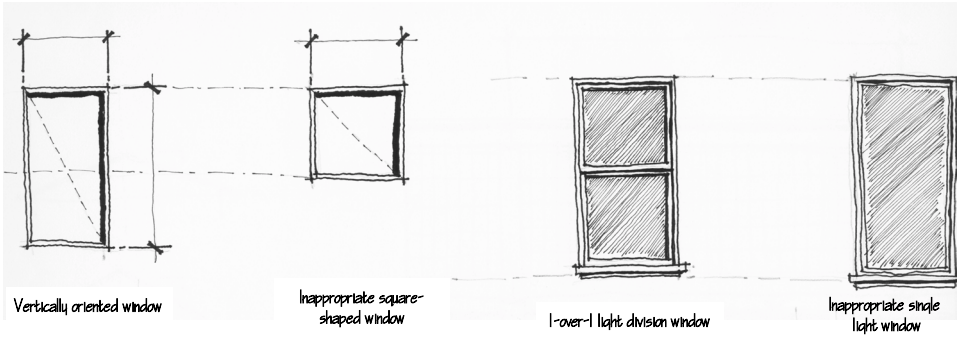
Decorative windows shall not exceed eight (8) sq. ft.

A minimum of 25% of the surface area of each story on the front facade shall be dedicated to window openings.

Appropriate wood window screens

When repairing/replacing original windows, the original window opening size shall be maintained.

Wood window screens are preferred; however, aluminum, vinyl and other metal screen frames may be used.



Diagrams of vertically-oriented window and square window shapes and examples of 1-over-1 and single light division windows.

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PRINCIPAL ELEVATION FEATURES – FRONT WALKWAY

DESIGN STANDARDS

A front walkway of at least 36" in width (48" for two or multi-family structures), shall directly connect the front door entry space to the sidewalk and/or curb, separate from any driveway surface.

NOTES:

A typical condition in this neighborhood is the existence of a front walkway the leads from the primary structure to the street and/ or sidewalk. If the front entry of a structure is rehabilitated, the design standard will be required. If the rehabilitation scope does not affect the front entry, the proposed standard is not required.

Typical example of front walkway on a residential property; Multi-family structures require 48" walkway

Typical example of front walkway on a residential property; Single-family structures require 36" walkway